



Fire Update

Meadow Fire

**Nez Perce
National Forest**

September 15, 2006 9:00 am

Internet Address: <http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/nezperce/gvc>

or: <http://www.inciweb.org>

For Fire Information Phone: (208) 842-9225 open 8 am to 9 pm

For Immediate Release

Fire Facts

The Meadow Fire is managed by Doug Turman's Northern Rockies Incident Management Team.

Date Started: September 3, 2006 **Cause of Ignition:** lightning **Location:** Red River, Idaho

Size: 7,200 acres **Percent Contained:** 15% **Estimated Time of Containment:** Unknown

Number of Personnel: 65 **Equipment:** 1 excavator, 1 engine

Aircraft: Shared air resources with the Nez Perce NF and other surrounding large fires

Cost to date: \$1,100,000 **Injuries Today:** 0

Cooperators: Idaho County Sheriff's Department, Idaho County Emergency Management Services, Nez Perce National Forest

Cooler Temperatures Keep Fire Activity in Check

Red River, Idaho –Although little rain fell over the Meadow Fire on Thursday, fire activity was slowed by significantly cooler temperatures and higher humidity. Little if any movement occurred along the fire perimeter and large fuels continued to smolder, with occasional single tree torching in the afternoon. As a result of significantly reduced fire activity, the general public was allowed to enter the Magruder Corridor (Montana Road) and the Green Mountain Lookout Road, escorted by pilot cars to travel through the fire area. The area closure was reduced in size to open up some areas to the east and northeast of the fire. This was a welcome relief for many hunters who had gathered in the area in anticipation of the opening of the general rifle hunting season on Friday. The fire has burned to within several hundred yards of the Magruder Corridor in several locations between Fourmile Creek and Granite Springs Campground. With a continuing forecast of cooler temperatures, and the approach of a cold front with rain beginning Friday evening, firefighters began to take down some structure protection equipment prior to predicted freezing temperatures. Additional mapping that was completed Wednesday evening has resulted in a change of the fire size to 7,200 acres.

With the opening of fire season, the public is reminded that the majority of the fire area has an uncontrolled fire perimeter. Fire activity still has the potential to increase, especially if warm, dry conditions return to the area which is common in late summer and early fall.

The Incident Command Post for the Meadow Fire is located at Red River Ranger Station and the fire camp is located at York's field. Please reduce speeds when driving through this area due to increased vehicle and pedestrian traffic.

Yesterday's Fire Activities

On the west edge of the fire perimeter where the fire jumped the line several days ago, crews worked to contain the slop over and patrolled the line to keep the fire east of Forest Road 1172. Patrol and monitoring activities were supported by engines and water tenders to prevent the fire from moving further downslope into Red River. Fire Crews began taking

down sprinkler systems, hoses, pumps and tanks around residences in the area between Red River Corrals and Red River Hot Springs. A final day of fuels reduction efforts continued around residences in that area. The fire stayed confined to the immediate perimeter, with little fire movement as it lay smoldering in large fuels under the tree canopy, with limited torching of individual trees. There have been no evacuations during this fire event.

The Magruder Corridor was patrolled for spot fires, with particular attention to facilities at 14 Mile Trailhead, Granite Springs Campground and Green Mountain Lookout.

Today's Planned Events

Today's primary emphasis will continue to be firefighter and public safety. Personnel from the local ranger district will continue to escort the general public through the fire area along the Magruder Corridor and as far north as Green Mountain Lookout. Pilot cars will operate between 6am and 8 pm. Crews will finish removing structure protection around residences along Forest Road 234 between Red River Corrals and Red River Hot Springs. An excavator will be used to rehab some firelines on the west side of the fire between Trail 505 and Forest Roads 9541 and 9542. Roads that have been brushed out over the past week will remain as contingency lines above residences along the Red River Road. The number one hazard continues to be snags and green trees with weakened root systems from fire damage.

Today's Weather Forecast and Fire Behavior

Humidity will be a bit lower today and continued cool temperatures should limit fire activity again. Weather will be partly cloudy and dry in the morning, but showers are expected by afternoon, extending into the night as a new weather disturbance sweeps across the area. The snow level will drop to 5000 feet overnight. During the day, maximum temperatures should be around 45-48 degrees in the fire area with 40-45% relative humidity. Wind on the fire is expected to be 4-8 mph with stronger gusts. Weather outlook for Saturday calls for a slight chance of showers in the morning, with afternoon clearing. High temperatures will be in the upper 40's to lower 50s over the fire.

The light precipitation received on Thursday did not penetrate the tree canopy. As a result, large fuels did not get wet and fire will continue to slowly back downslope where there are continuous concentrations of heavy fuel. Single tree torching will still occur. The fire will be creeping and smoldering beneath the canopy along the fire perimeter in areas where the fire has encountered forest regeneration and in areas where there are lesser amounts of dead fuels.

Area, Road and Trail Closures

For public safety, an area closure is currently in effect throughout the area surrounding the fire, including areas where the fire is most likely to spread if it becomes more active in the coming days and weeks. The size of the closure was reduced yesterday to allow for public access, primarily for hunting season. Access to the forest is closed at the following locations: Forest Road 234 (except to local residents); the Magruder Corridor (Montana Road) between Red River Ranger Station and the junction of the Green Mountain Lookout Road (Forest Road 285) except to vehicles traveling with a pilot car; the Green Mountain Lookout Road from the junction of the Magruder Corridor to Green Mountain Lookout except for vehicles traveling through the area with a pilot car; and Road 423 to Black Hawk Mountain. The closure is not expected to be lifted until fire conditions improve. Visit the Grangeville Interagency Dispatch Center website at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/nezperce/gvc> or www.inciweb.org for maps and other information about the closure. Specific questions about the closure can be directed to the Red River Ranger Station at (208) 842-2245.

Other Messages

Hunters and other recreationists need to be alert for dead standing trees (snags) that may fail, especially during windy periods. Be on the lookout for smoke from holdover lightning strikes from last week's storms that may still show up, and report them as soon as possible. These holdover lightning fires have been showing up every day for the past week. Hunters are also reminded to put all fires dead out, both camp fires and warming fires, so they don't contribute to additional fire starts. Fire crews and equipment are moving through the area so please drive defensively as you travel through the Red River area. The fire area remains closed to camping and travel by foot, horseback or vehicle except when accompanied by a pilot car along the routes specified above. This includes foot travel for hunting.

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